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SEMINAR
ON
VALUE ORIENTATION IN
HUMAN PROBLEM SOLVING

STUDENTS' CHAPTER

MARCH 7, 1981

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VIVEKANANDA NIDHI
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PREFACE

As recommended by the Seminar on Value Orientation in Human Problem Solving held on January 3-5, 1981, the Students' Chapter which followed on March 7, 1981 was the first of the Value Orientation Programmes undertaken by Vivekananda Nidhi. At the end of the deliberations it was decided that the resolutions adopted should be sent to the University Grants Commission, various educational institutions, and the different government departments concerned. This report of the proceedings of the Students' Chapter includes the key note address, resource papers, discussions and resolutions. It should be of interest to social scientists and all concerned with student welfare, parents, teachers, educational institutions and the government.

Evelyn Guha

CONCEPT AND PURPOSE OF THE SEMINAR

Values are perennial, indivisible and universal. Society degenerates when individuals forget their own universal nature. Students today are acutely aware of the sharp contrast between the tremendous advance and potentialities of science and technology on one hand and the low standards prevailing in society, in personal and public lives, on the other. They are confused and know not where to turn for guidance ; their reactions are often violent.

An effort has to be made to identify the causes which have led to this state of affairs and to evolve remedial measures through dialogues and discussions. Students have to grow and develop their talents and sensibilities, their responsiveness to intellectual, moral and spiritual values. To do this they have to recognise their essential relationship to others. The purpose of this seminar is to help the student community identify this relationship through self-searching discussions, and then to propose how to orient students' reactions to the environment so as to reflect the essential values thus identified. The specific areas where the

student community finds itself in conflict with the environment, and the problems arising therefrom are to be discussed under the following heads :

Relations with parents/ guardians.

Relations with teachers.

Students and the examination system.

Students and politics—in the campus and outside.

REFERENCE PAPER

*Prepared and circulated
by the Students' Seminar Committee*

As a follow up of the recently held seminar on Value Orientation in Human Problem Solving which was intended to be 'a starting point for an envisaged movement of value orientation in every aspect of the complex social fabric', another seminar to deal with problems faced by the student community is now being organized. Its purpose is to help create an awareness of the perennial values and of the need for value orientation in the most sensitive and vital part of human society.

Today youth in general and students in particular find themselves more or less in confrontation with their environment. An environment which appears to them unfriendly, of double standards, what is preached seldom being seen to be practised ; full of various kinds of distortions and exploitation, some crude, others very subtle. The reaction of many is an impulse to destroy the whole set-up so that an ideal order can take its place, others become cynical and drift into the ways of their

elders, while a few find nothing worth striving for and thus become a prey to any indulgence which promises some extraordinary sensations or 'kicks'.

While these reactions are understandable, it is equally true that the students form a part of society whose actions influence the society in which they live, and also reflect back on themselves. In the not very distant future they will have grown older and will be occupying the positions of authority and responsibility. The real test of idealism is not agitation but steadfastness.

Youthful energy and enthusiasm constitute a tremendous force which is very vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous people in the name of some new ideology—political, religious or separatist. It is high time students take a good look at themselves and at their environment and after a study in depth, form clear ideas about the ends and objectives of their lives. The means whereby these objectives are to be attained are no less important, for improper means may defeat the very ends aimed at. It is hoped that the discussions at the seminar will be thought-provoking enough to give a start, though in a small way, to this process.

With this objective in mind, the discussions will be under the following four broad outlines ;

- I. Relations with parents and guardians.

- II. Relations with teachers.
- III. Students and the examination system.
- IV. Students and politics—in the campus and outside.

Without pre-conceived judgement or any particular bias, some questions under these four heads are listed below, in the hope that students will find them relevant and helpful towards clarifying their own ideas.

- I. Relations with parents and guardians
- II. Relations with teachers.

The home is the first training ground for a human being, the school and college together is the second. The queries given are therefore common to both.

Is it possible to have self-respect without respecting others, especially those with whom one is in closest contact ?

Is respect a value ?

Are parents to be regarded as mere biological entities responsible for one's birth ?

Is it possible to respect one's parents and teachers in spite of their human limitations which may be very obvious ? If so, how ?

What do you expect from your teachers ?

Is discipline a value or is it outdated ?

Can anyone exist independent of the traditions behind him ?

Are traditions of no value ? Are they a storehouse of wisdom ?

What are the effects of a lack of truth and integrity in the home or school/college ? Are truth and integrity then values ? Can they be maintained even in an unfavourable environment, or should one take the path of least resistance ?

Does hypocrisy pay ?

III. Students and the examination system.

What should be the objectives of an examination system/curriculum ?

Taking into account the prevailing social and economic conditions, how can they be realized ?

Is education becoming more and more job-oriented ?

Is some acquaintance with the classical literature of one's own civilization desirable ? If so, why ?

What are the causes of the large-scale cheating at examinations ? Can cheating be prevented ? How ?

IV. Students and Politics—in the campus and outside.

What is the meaning of the word politics ; its original meaning, and its meaning in popular parlance ?

Is political activity necessary for human happiness or welfare ? If so, why ?

Can imported political ideology prove effective ? Or should there be an interaction with the national heritage ?

By highlighting the differences between parties or groups, politics as it is practised generates hatred. Of what value is hatred ?

Should there be barriers between man and man because of differences in political ideology, race, colour, or religion ?

Is unity a value ? If so, how can the essential unity between man and man inspite of differences, be realized and inculcated ?

KEYNOTE

Swami Yuktananda

1. *The Challenge of the Bewildering Perspective*

To the young enquiring mind observing and trying to understand its environment there presents itself a contrast at once striking and bewildering. On one side are the marvels of science and technology, almost defeating the imagination. Not a day passes it seems but some new idea takes birth or some discovery of far-reaching consequences is made. As for the crop of inventions and innovations designed to make man's life easier and happier, there seems no end to their infinite variety. From this view point the prospect is exhilarating, the potentialities limitless, and the scope the entire universe. On the other side, the human scene presents a prospect almost impossible to reconcile. Instead of contentment, peace and order, there is misery, frustration and chaos resulting from endless conflicts—between nations, between groups and between men, and more disturbing internal conflicts within nations, groups and within the individual.

Selfishness or narrow self-interest emerges as the divisive force behind all these. Selfishness in

all its forms, as injustice and exploitation, as hypocrisy and corruption and in its more virulent forms as hatred and as insatiable greed for power or money or fame, for things and sensations. Yet paradoxically, though each is out for himself, no one is satisfied. The haves are as frustrated as the have-nots. Something seems to be very wrong with the behaviour of man which has made a mockery of all the achievements of science and technology.

2. *Should The Young Go The Way Of Their Elders ?*

In this context it is easy for the young to blame and condemn their elders who have created this tragic state of affairs. The more thoughtful, the students preparing themselves for life, should consider whether they have equipped themselves with the strength and the wisdom to avoid in time becoming just like their elders. What is required is first of all, a thorough analysis of the situation, a study in depth so that the causes may be identified. Why is it that man who has achieved such spectacular success in probing the mysteries of the universe and in bringing this knowledge in the form of technology to the level of utility and benefit for all, proved himself such a miserable failure in his relationships with others, individually, or collectively as groups or nations? Is it because he has not been able to bring the same

objectivity with which he investigated his physical environment to the study of his own being ?

3. *Science Knows No Barriers*

Science knows no barriers, no hypocrisy, no fanaticism. Science is a clear uncompromising search for truth. But when man examines himself and his behaviour, the individual prejudices and petty self-interests stand in the way so that he does not perceive his true nature. The uncompromising honesty, the intense concentration and critical analysis of the scientific attitude are required if we are to arrive at the truth regarded ourselves as individuals or groups. We have to stand back as it were and dispassionately observe ourselves. This can be done by the young who are sincere, whose minds are flexible ; it is not possible for those who have become set in their ways, who are fearful of change.

4. *Search For The Basic Unity*

Science is basically a search for unity in the infinite variety of nature. What was called matter in all its forms was analysed first and reduced to its ultimate constituents, the elementary particles. All matter, including the human body was found to be made of the same primary particles. Then in the study of the interactions of energy with matter, one was found to be convertible into the

other. The distinction between matter and energy broke down ; this was the fall of materialism ; our sense perceptions were realized to be crude and misleading. The basic stuff of the universe is one and the same in essence, now manifesting itself as particles and now as waves ; it can neither be called matter nor called waves but is an abstract concept which includes both. The basic forces in nature are in the process of being unified.

5. *Human Behaviour Contrary To The Basic Unity. Why ?*

Thus while science is clearly heading for unity, man's behaviour on the contrary is creating disunity and disarray in human society. What are the laws of science ? They are certain fundamental truths in terms of which all natural phenomena may be understood and interpreted. We are also parts of the universe ; there must be similar fundamental laws common to all mankind, which would indicate what man is in essence, the truth of his being. Are we not also parts of that fundamental unity to which science is pointing ? You may say this unity of man has to be proved by the methods of science. True, but science itself has often proceeded prompted by some analogy or intuition to formulate a hypothesis, which is then examined and tested to see whether it is capable of explaining all related phenomena ; if it succeeds it is accepted as a law.

6. *Essential Unity Of Man*

Thus it would not be unscientific for us to assume the essential unity of man as a working hypothesis and see where it takes us. Everyone of us is searching for happiness though our ideas of where or how it is to be found vary widely. This quest for enduring happiness is then a basic fact of our nature. Could we not accept the unity of man in his essence as a working hypothesis—the primary value so to speak—and with this in mind formulate codes of conduct conducive to its inculcation and then examine whether these codes make for our individual and collective happiness and well-being? If they are found capable of reducing the chaos in our lives, then surely they deserve a trial. These codes would embody the secondary values (in the sense that they derive from the primary value of unity), which we need to identify today. This has been done before in every civilization the world over, but in our times they need to be reidentified with utmost clarity because our traditions are being broken down under the impact of rapid and startling changes in circumstances. In nature, no phenomenon or process can violate the fundamental laws of science; nor can we transgress the basic laws of our own being without bringing in misery and chaos—the very opposite of the happiness we seek.

7. *Lack Of Conviction Is The Cause Of Confusion And Conflict* •

All our confusion and conflict today is caused by a lack of conviction about anything. If we acquire firm conviction about the primary value unity and the other derived values, we have a test which we can apply to every situation. The solutions will emerge clear and unequivocal.

8. *Value System in Problem Solving*

If there is anything about which there is unanimous agreement it is that a radical change is necessary in society, but planning based on muddled thinking can only result in confusion worse confounded. The matter which requires immediate attention is therefore a reconstruction of our mental life. We probably need to remind ourselves that the wonderful part of man is not his body—which requires only some physiology and biochemistry for its explanation—but the mind at once so powerful yet subtle, the creator of thoughts that continue to influence others long after the death of the body. Value orientation means simply this—the utilization of the reasoning powers of the mind to arrive logically at a conviction regarding some goal and then the creation of a mental attitude that will enable the individual to act, rationally and objectively, towards achievement of that goal.

To illustrate, let us consider the value system with respect to sports. The educative value of sports is recognized and sportsmanship is a mental attitude which gives priority to the following values :

1. *Endurance*
2. *Courage*
3. *Sense of fairplay*
4. *Respect for rules*
5. *Coordinated effort*
6. *Subordination of personal interests to those of the team*

If these values are not clearly recognized, they will not be practised. The very concept of sportsmanship will be lost and the game goes with it. The anti-values which then take the place of the six values are :

1. *Personal vanity*
2. *Group vanity*
3. *Lust for victory*
4. *Hatred of rivals*
5. *Contempt for people outside the select group*
6. *Undue importance given to play and neglect of other faculties*

What happens when anti-values replace the values of sportsmanship was amply illustrated in the football match in Calcutta some months ago when sixteen people lost their lives. A total ban on such matches was considered. Without rules there can be no game. To avoid such situations each participant needs to be convinced that the desirable quality of sportsmanship is based on certain values which are its cause, so to speak. This conviction can be acquired by rational analysis ; thereafter conscious efforts can be made to put it into practice.

The characteristics of a rational approach are :

1. *Purposefulness*
2. *Adaptability*
3. *Power of self-criticism*
4. *Conscious effort to move in a single direction in order to reach the objective instead of allowing the mental forces to work in contrary directions.*

The same logic illustrated by the example of sports can be applied to the problems arising in relations with parents or guardians and with teachers. The continuity between generations needs to be kept in mind for the students of today are the parents and teachers of tomorrow, so no sharp division is possible. The question of respect

is often raised. It is no doubt desirable that parents and teachers should be able to command respect and not have to demand it ; at the same time it is obvious that disrespect is an anti-value which can only hinder a solution. If young people respect elders just because they are older, they in time will obtain respect from the generation to come. The young have to invest in respect, so to say. The rules of the game are nothing but certain norms of behaviour which create an atmosphere conducive to harmonious relationships between one generation and another. Looked at in this way, an attitude of respect is just one such norm.

It is quite true that the examination system requires a thorough overhaul. Cannot students work for this change in a responsible manner, at the same time observing the rules as they exist for the time being ? The students suffer most in the chaos resulting from flouting the rules at examinations. Witness the educational scene in West Bengal for the last two decades ; a degree requiring three years has seldom been obtained in less than five.

If we enquire into the origin of political activities, we find that they spring from the very basic human urge to ensure the welfare of all. Behind it is the tacit assumption of the essential oneness of all mankind in spite of superficial differences.

This urge translated into programmes means the equitable sharing of all available resources, together with efforts to increase production to ensure that there is enough for all. No doubt limited self-interest and human greed have contrived to make nonsense of these very valuable efforts, but if the aim is kept in mind, then political activities inculcate a sense of obligation to others and a sense of belonging. We have forgotten the true meaning of politics. What we need today are political theories based on the essential unity underlying all manifestations—things, events and consciousness. The hatred generating political activities today is decidedly an anti-value.

Young people can initiate progress in a positive direction because they have two very important advantages. They are relatively free from any particular mental fixation and they can respond to stimuli with sensitivity and flexibility. The concern of the elders should also be to see that young people are not subjected to irrational sensory deprivation which destroys creativity and causes mind-crippling inhibitions.

It is a very good thing that students from various schools and colleges, though in a small number, have assembled here today. It shows an awareness on your part of the needs of our times and brings hope that society can yet overcome cynicism and inertia. To translate your awareness

into action based on intellectual conviction is indeed a difficult undertaking, but with your abundant creativity and capacity for innovation you can forge ahead to generate a thought wave which will spread through the student community till it reaches all educated people in society. Young friends, you cannot but succeed ; people everywhere are looking for the leadership you are striving to extend.

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THE PROCEEDINGS

The Students' Chapter of the Seminar on Value Orientation in Human Problem Solving was held on March 7, 1981 at the auditorium of the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants, Calcutta. The seminar was open to all students between the ages of 17 and 25. In all 96 delegates were registered and though many of the universities, colleges and schools in and around Calcutta had been requested to sponsor their representatives, it was significant that all the delegates had registered as individuals*. Besides there were 38 observer delegates representing parents, guardians and teachers.

Raikamal Majumder, Secretary of the Students' Seminar Committee introduced the subject of the seminar. In the absence of Shri B. K. Dutt, President, Vivekananda Nidhi Seminar Organizing Committee, Shri Saikat Guha, its Joint Secretary welcomed the Chairman, delegates and volunteers. Swami Yuktananda delivered the keynote address.

The days proceedings then commenced with Shri Subrata Roy Chowdhury in the chair. A few

*Delegates profile on page 75

words about the preparation of the resource papers may be relevant. The students organizing the seminar had decided to pool their ideas in producing the resource papers to make up for their lack of experience. They had held several discussions in terms of the guidelines given in the reference paper, and some had put their thoughts in writing. After this it was decided that four of them would be responsible for the compilation, one for each of the subjects to be discussed. The papers were the end result of a joint effort.

Each session started with the compiler reading out the resource paper and thus initiating the deliberations. The discussions were lively, free and spontaneous, thanks to the skillful and sympathetic guidance of the Chairman whose endeavour was to see that as many students as possible could participate in the short time available.

After the open sessions the students divided into four groups for further discussion and then the recommendations were presented to the Chairman.

A panel of rapporteurs comprising :

Prof. R. K. Ghosh

Shri A. K. Majumder

Prof. Parimal Kar

Shri C. S. Samanta

Dr. Maitreyi Bose

Smt. Jayati Sen Gupta

Shri Monoranjan Bhattacharya

Shri Bikram Sen

Shri Kamal Bhattacharya

assisted all through in preparing the summaries and recommendations.

Swami Yuktananda then made his concluding remarks. Shri Roy Chowdhury, the Chairman, commented on the highlights of the proceedings laying stress on the far-reaching significance of such exercises in providing guidelines for action programmes to usher in the desired qualitative change in our social life. He felt that the deliberations and the course material would be helpful to him when he took up his assignment as Regents Professor in the University of California.

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TO THE RESOURCE PAPERS

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Session I

RELATIONS WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

*Resource Paper compiled by
Antara Devsen*

What exactly do we mean by parents ? Do we mean all adults who have produced children ? If so, we have three kinds of parents : (a) those who have given birth to children but have never considered the matter seriously, (b) those who only think they know all about children and so are likely to get into a mess, and (c) the handful of ideal parents. At present we are concerned with the parents in the first two categories.

Every adult was once a child, every society consists of human beings who develop from children into parents. The child bears promise of things to come. For this reason it should be nurtured with care and respect ; to treat it as a "mere" child whom anyone can have is an offence. As Erikson puts it, "The child because of its immature equipment has no way of differentiating between inner and outer, real and imaginary dangers. He has yet to learn this and while he learns he needs the

adults' reassuring instructions". To be reassuring, the parents' instructions must tally with their behaviour. Children are taught to tell the truth. In fact a child naturally tells the truth, but perhaps he hears his father who is in the best of health ringing up his office to say he is too ill to go to work. Or an adolescent realizes that his father is manipulating his income tax returns. What should he do then ? This is the kind of problem which in one way or another, has to be faced by today's youth. The young perceive with something like horror the confusion and hypocrisy behind the parents' facade ; their attitude towards their parents moves between submission and imitation and open rebellion. The latent confusion and contradiction of one generation is thus transmitted to the next with disastrous results.

Fifty years ago, the world was a different one, where our grandparents could demand obedience and curb rebellion with no uncertain hand. Today's parents suffer from an inner conflict, they act with much doubt and hesitation. They are themselves so unsure of their own values that they are unable to instil the necessary confidence in their offspring. Children suffer in consequence, because though they wish to rebel with half their minds, with the other half they want to respect their parents and rely upon their judgement. When this half is left high and dry, the children lose their sense of direction and start to drift. Today society

itself is unsteady so individuals cannot seek refuge in "the system" as they did in earlier days.

Nobody doubts that a relationship based on mutual affection and respect between parents and children in the family is the best preparation for life which will set the pattern for all future relationships with others. Most cases of dropouts or delinquents have been traced to unhappy home-life. Failures at examinations or in intended careers, or more harmful tendencies like drug addiction or alcoholism are often due to the same cause. Unhappy homes result from either emotional or economic insecurity of the parents or guardians. In traditional Indian families constant domestic tension between members of a joint family can create endless bitterness for children who are called upon to take sides among adults whom they love dearly. In modern families the battlefield is more limited and the warriors are the parents. The child in this case is more helpless as he has nobody else to turn to. Children of divorced or separated parents are undoubtedly under a handicap, but so are the children of widowed parents. It is worse in a way to grow up in a home where the parents have not separated but whose incompatibility is beyond repair; the children then become pawns in the parental wars. The other kind of unhappy home is caused by lack of necessary financial security. Lack of nourishment affects the mind as well as the body. The

incessant quarrels and complaints lead to emotional insecurity as well. Failure to do well at school or college is not caused by poverty alone. Delinquent children often come from affluent homes where self-centred parents too busy with their own activities, compensate for their lack of care and attention by filling their children's pockets with cash, and then neglect to check how the cash is being spent. This more than anything else leads to drug addiction and alcoholism in Indian urban society.

The communication gap is much discussed today as a crucial factor in parent-offspring problems. While it is true that there is bound to be a difference in attitudes and externals because the young belong to the future and cannot look back, this would not present much of a problem if there is mutual respect and sympathy. Only if adults have the strength of their convictions and show themselves capable of acting on them can the young feel that they deserve genuine respect. This is the crux of the problem, that the present generation of parents is rootless, that its hollowness and inconsistency in thought and action has been exposed to the young.

The social crisis we are passing through with its factors, political, economic and cultural undoubtedly affects the individual and his relationships. Thus parents and children today are victims of

their times. A vicious circle is the result where the people are creating the times, and the times are creating the people. But surely it is for the people to call a halt to this process by identifying the causes and then changing the times.

DISCUSSIONS

The incompatibility between the behaviour and the instructions of parents was the aspect emphasized by most.

Sanchita Biswas (Gokhale Memorial Girls' School) said that delinquency in children should be treated with understanding, not with harshness.

Raikamal Majumdar (Research Scholar, Calcutta University) questioned whether parental self-centredness as a cause of child delinquency was a special feature of upper income group families.

Debjani Roy (Muralidhar Girls' School) replied that this could happen in a family of any economic status. The root of the trouble was 'parental war', whether or not the parents were legally separated. Warring parents vitiated the atmosphere of the family leading to delinquency in children.

Debasis Banerjee (Presidency College) in his presentation identified the problems of children in three different economic groups :

- (a) The affluent class (1%) produce lonely children alienated from the rest of the population.
- (b) The middle class (29%). These parents impose 'controls' on the children for their own selfish ends such as economic security etc. Adolescent creativity is thus stifled and they grow up as conformists.
- (c) Those below the poverty level (70%) produce children with utter negligence.

He recommended group-living for children in line with the old gurukul system. In this context he mentioned the group living-cum-education concepts of Tagore, Aurobindo and Gandhi.

Sumita Gupta (Presidency College) called upon the compiler to explain whether (according to the paper) the moral standards of parents was in doubt or their affection as causes for adolescent delinquency.

Antara Devsen (South Point High School) said that she doubted neither. Parental affection was not in doubt and parents moral standards could not be evaluated by her. All she recommended was a smoother communication so that the relations could be harmonious and not quarrelsome.

Niladri Banerjee (Calcutta University) suggested that the middle-class parents' habit of forcing

their children to be competitive in every aspect of daily life and especially urging them to top the list at examinations builds up a sense of inferiority in children as they grow up. He rejected Debasis Banerjee's suggestion of a 'commune' which has been tried but not with full success anywhere.

Session II

RELATIONS WITH TEACHERS

*Resource Paper compiled by
Anusree Mitra*

Disrespect.....Indiscipline.....Disobedience
.....unmanageable.....really, how familiar these words are and how often they are used by teachers to describe their students' behaviour. Both at home and abroad students today wield great power. To cite only a few examples, witness the agitation in Assam conducted mainly by students, the active part played by students in the industrial strike in Poland, and in the cultural revolution in China some years ago. These students are the products of educational institutions which comprise not merely bricks and stones but the teachers who teach there. These teachers have a great responsibility because their influence on society though indirect is very potent. An analysis of the teacher student relationship is therefore of utmost importance.

In ancient India, the teacher was held in high esteem. Students went to the 'Gurugriha' to study and learn all about life from the teacher.

The relationship was characterized by respect and affection. With the passage of time, the teachers have lost their place in the lives of their students, the relationship with their pupils is one of either open conflict or apathy. Each group blames the other for this development.

Students impatient of institutional authority which seems to them to be at best callous, and at worst directly inimical to their interests, have resorted to violent measures to ventilate their grievances. To cite a few examples—the other day the Principal of a girls' college was gheraoed, abused and kept without even water for five hours just because she refused to send up as candidates for the Higher Secondary examination those who had failed in several subjects. She had a cerebral attack and died a few days later.

A few months ago, the Principal of a Medical College in Calcutta was similarly treated because the girl students wanted a hostel of their own. He had pleaded his inability to take any action as the matter was beyond his control but to no avail. He was so humiliated that he resigned.

Cases of teacher-invigilators being beaten up for performing their duties properly are too common to attract much notice. There are few Vice-Chancellors in West Bengal who have not been gheraoed for one reason or another—post-

ponement of examinations, awarding of grace marks or for reasons of student union rivalry.

Under the influence of mob psychology there is no limit to such desperate acts. Do the students ever consider whether their claims have any legal validity or whether their acts are detrimental to the society of which they are a part ? These same students are the teachers of tomorrow.

This situation has not developed in a day. The teachers have the major share of the responsibility for it because they have failed to instil the true values in their pupils. Why have they failed ? Surely because they lack values themselves. It is no good preaching values, they have to be taught by example. What kind of example have the teachers set their students ?

Today, even in the best colleges, some teachers may not even bother to take their classes day after day. The students are however rewarded with their 'percentage'. This has become quite a practice especially for the subsidiary or 'pass' subjects. Another teacher who has not taken the trouble to prepare for his class comes late, chats for a while and leaves before the bell rings. Even men and women of calibre behave in this way because they make light of their responsibilities. Many are so busy with their own research that they regard their teaching assignments as a nuisance.

If students appeal to the Principal they are either given false promises or made to understand that they are challenging authority. Some Principals are known to have stated that it was no part of their duty to see that the syllabus was completed. In rare cases where the Principal responds by calling for an explanation from the teacher concerned the latter's attitude becomes revengeful. The students are threatened with poor marks for internal assessment or for practical examinations at home centres. No wonder that they seek safety in numbers and take to mass agitations.

A good teacher welcomes questions from his pupils as indications of response, but these have become the exceptions rather than the rule. Most teachers look upon questions as a direct affront and the hardy ones who dare to argue are singled out and humiliated.

Negligence and shirking of responsibility is common in India today in all activities but it needs to be remembered that teachers deal with human material at its most impressionable stage. The effects therefore make themselves felt almost immediately and are far more serious.

Do teachers even consider what impression is made on young minds when they indulge in trade-union activities by going on strike and taking out processions. Can they thereafter demand respect also as a right ?

Students need guidance. Certain qualities of mind and heart are required of a teacher and it is for these qualities that he is respected. Students, however turbulent, will willingly obey a teacher however strict provided they feel that he is aware of their need and tries his best to fulfil it. They will ignore his human limitations if they are sure of his ready sympathy. Only then will they accept his counsel.

Teaching, therefore, is or should be a highly specialized profession; unfortunately it has become the refuge of those whose capabilities do not permit them to obtain a more lucrative occupation. In the circumstances, the very minimum that should be done by those in charge of the administration in institutions is to see that the requirements of the students—whether it be finishing the syllabus, library or hostel facilities etc.,—are anticipated and attempts made to meet them before demands can be made. In this way confrontation can be avoided but relations can never really be cordial till the teachers deserve the respect which they think is their due.

DISCUSSIONS

Raikamal Mazumder read out the questions posed in the reference paper on the basis of which the resource paper was prepared.

Malabika Mukherjee (Gokhale Memorial Girls' School) made the point that the initiative for maintaining happy relationship between teachers and the students must come from the teachers themselves who must give opportunity to the students to express themselves freely, even when they disagree.

Ashim Mukherjee (Presidency College) posed the question whether the teacher-student problem was really a new problem. In his view such problems existed even before and by way of illustration he referred to Derozio and the Hindu School. He made another point that the teachers can never command respect unless they perform their duties as teachers. The entire problem, in his view, should be looked at as something like a reciprocal relationship where both teachers and students have equal share in bringing about and maintaining relationship of mutual trust and respect.

Upal Sen (Moulana Azad College) made the point that teachers must deserve respect in terms of their behaviour and attitude towards students. If the teachers do not command respect, how can the students be expected to be respectful towards them ? If they show respect to their teachers formally, even when they have a different opinion about the scholarship and integrity of the teacher, it will be nothing but hypocrisy.

Debasis Banerjee (Presidency College) emphasised the points made by Upal Sen and stated that respect cannot be imposed upon students who must be guided by their conscience and their own experience. When students respect the teacher, it is a spontaneous outpour of the heart.

Neyaz Azam (Bangabasi College). In his view, teachers are not directly responsible for the present unhappy state of affairs. Those in charge of administration of academic institutions have a large portion the blame for the present malaise. He made another point that large classes should be divided into smaller sections in order to facilitate easier communication between the teacher on the one hand and the students on the other.

Kaustav Sen Gupta (Habra High School) reacted to the submission of Ashim Mukherjee by saying that all teachers cannot be tarred with the same brush. Some students may have some unhappy experience with some teachers ; but it cannot be said of all teachers and all students.

Debasis Bhattacharya (Kalyani University) highlighted the economic condition of the teachers which forces them to take to other means of supplementing their meagre salary. As a result, many of them are not able to give as much time to their classwork as they should. He further

made the point that many idealistic teachers also fall far short of expectations in terms of their performance in classrooms because of this economic crisis.

Tamal Maitra (Presidency College) said that the teacher-student relationship is essentially a very happy and sweet relationship which is the basis of all healthy academic pursuits. He was therefore of the view that the students should not always be very critical of their teachers because that would frustrate the purpose of education.

Ramshankar Bhattacharya (Presidency College) The primary duty of a student is to learn from his teacher. As such, he must have confidence and trust in his teacher. Otherwise, he cannot get the best out of him. A student should trust his teacher for two reasons. First, if he does not do so, then ultimately he is likely to lose confidence in himself, because self-confidence never grows when one cannot repose confidence in others. Secondly, if he antagonises the teacher by his conduct, it may tell upon his career adversely.

Bhaskar Sarkar (South Point High School) Coaching classes outside the institution are sometimes helpful for students, but there are cases where the students are pressurised into joining the coaching classes in which the teachers of the institution are interested. This creates an unhealthy

atmosphere and mars the cordiality between the teachers and the students.

Nilanjan Bhattacharya (St Xavier's College) It is true that the students may sometimes critically assess whether a particular teacher or a group of teachers deserve respect; but the question is what should be the yardstick for such an assessment. He questioned the validity of an absolute yardstick which might be applied to all situations. It was his view that yardsticks are relative to social and economic setting and as such one cannot be valid for all ages or for all times.

The Chairman : The Chairman drew a comparison between teacher-student relationship and the relationship between the judge and the counsel. There are judges whom a counsel might find very annoying, but even then, a counsel is expected to maintain proper decorum and respect to the Chair occupied by the judge. If this is lacking, then the counsel himself would fail to attract the respect which he expects from the Chair. He therefore observed that the students should have a similar attitude towards their teachers.

Antara Devsen (South Point High School) She did not agree with the statement in Anusree Mitra's paper that the teachers lack 'values'. She stated that it is not always true. Sometimes,

because of communication gap which again might be due to various factors, the teachers may not be able to influence the students. Antara also posed the question as to whether 'values' can at all be instilled.

Session III

STUDENTS AND THE EXAMINATION SYSTEM

*Resource Paper compiled by
Raikamal Majumder*

Exams, exams and more exams. From the nursery age to young adulthood, one's existence is punctuated by exams, the most dreaded word in the vocabulary of children and parents. And wherefore this obsession with examinations? So that one may be rewarded with a degree—that magic word which entitles one to be called educated, which is a necessary but not sufficient condition for employment, without which a girl's value slumps in the marriage market. Even a very successful self-made man is ashamed to admit that he made his way in life without being a graduate.

No wonder then that hordes force their way into the colleges turning them into factories for the mass-production of graduates; work goes on in these factories in three shifts—morning, day and evening. What they learn is immaterial—the thing is to get hold of a degree. Will it help them or prepare them for the future? What will a bank clerk

do with his information on Shakespearean tragedies or a housewife with her knowledge of the political theories of Aristotle? That is an irrelevant question for without these masses of information, one could not have become a clerk nor the other a wife. Therefore everyone has to pass out through the factory. Most do not have a taste for serious study or a capacity for analytical thinking, but if they have to get a degree or perish, then get it they will, by fair means or foul.

Witness the crop of bazar note-books by 'eminent' professors and university examiners' for those troubled by a delicate conscience or by timidity. Days and nights of torture follow memorizing things they cannot understand. For others not so burdened, anything is legitimate—manipulations to have the questions leaked out, bribery or assault of examiners, tabulators and invigilators, not to mention the varied and ingenious methods of cheating at the hall itself. It is all quite logical.

If we wish to rid ourselves of malpractices such as these we shall have to first of all rid ourselves of the obsession with degrees. If the majority of people in other countries do without them and prosper, is there any reason why we should burden ourselves with this superstition?

At any given time, the percentage of people with a taste for scholarship is small—let them go

in for higher studies. We all accept this principle in the case of the fine arts such as music, painting etc. For these few—the intellectuals, the ideal teaching process, whether in Oxford or Harvard or in the Gurugrihas of ancient India, is the same. A teacher has a handful of students under his care whom he supervises and guides. Why not arrange it so that only these students of much above average intelligence have to sit for examinations? Practically all the ills of the examination system would disappear. This principle is already followed by some institutions, for example the Institutes of Technology. Each institute has its own schedule of examination, awards its own degrees, and because the number is small, examinations are held on time and malpractices few.

What about the majority? By all means let them also be educated, but in a more meaningful sense of the word than it now conveys. Upto a certain stage the education provided should be liberal and general instead of specialized. Let the students choose the subjects they are interested in, untrammelled by fear of examinations. The assessment should be internal, and with few exceptions, all will pass out with a 'degree' which would only be a school or college leaving certificate indicating the level of attainment. At this stage those with a taste for studies could resort to their universities, while the majority would need to acquire some specialized skill, to fit them for employment.

Some short career-oriented courses exist already, more will have to be established. Young people will naturally choose the one that interests them so the immense waste of time, money and energy which we witness now should be avoidable.

The details will need to be worked out after careful thought. But unless we bring out a commonsense solution to the problem in education in India today, change for the sake of change is no remedy ; what is required is clear thinking and a wide-ranging view of all aspects of the problem including its interactions with society.

DISCUSSIONS

Debjani Roy, Muralidhar Girls' School &
Bandana Roychowdhury, Calcutta University

The examination system should be more practical and problem/need-oriented.

Debapriya Dasgupta, *Soumitra Pramanik* and
Tamal Maitra of Presidency College

All of them indicated that there is a need of examination system but the present system is not helpful in locating talents. It puts a premium on the degree to the exclusion of knowledge. Internal examination was advocated. Tamal Maitra in

particular stressed upon self-assessment to examine one's own talent.

Ansuree Mitra, Presidency College

She did not support the idea that study of literature has no relevance with the future life. The idea is probably that education is the means of edification of the student and this has got nothing to do with one's vocation or personal life.

Kaustav Sengupta, Habra High School

He feels annoyed with the timing of T. V. programmes particularly during the examination season.

Niladri Sankar Banerjee, Calcutta University

He stated that though the present system has delivered some amount of goods and cannot be discarded altogether, it may require some modification, and as such, there is no reason to put no-confidence on the teachers.

Antara Devsen, South Point High School

She agreed with the view point of Anusree Mitra.

Himangsu Sekhar Maity, Calcutta University

He complained about the heavy syllabus and for the shortage of time for preparation. Education

should be relevant according to one's inclination. Hence he recommended that the present system should put emphasis on more and more subject-specialisation. Examinations should be conducted on semester system on objective test basis.

Prithul Chakraborty, Goenka College of Commerce

He indicated that the present system of examination gives over-emphasis on a single final examination without taking into account the performance during the period of study. The evaluation is some time affected by the examiners' temperament which is subject to environmental influences. He did not support fully the internal assessment system particularly it is liable to personal influences.

Debasis Banerjee, Presidency College

He stressed upon socio-orientation for the reformation of the present examination system to help spot out the talents. According to him awarding of grace marks will depend more on social necessity.

Session IV

STUDENTS AND POLITICS IN THE CAMPUS AND OUTSIDE

Compiled by
Debapriya Das Gupta

Politics is a very confusing word. We must have a clear idea about it before proceeding with our discussion.

Politics originally meant the desire to create an environment, best suited for development of a human being. But development with happiness requires both material and mental fulfilment. Only material fulfilment might be achieved by active politics, leaving the mind as hungry as before.

Nowadays, on the other hand, politics means the creation of an artificial environment where a few gain at the expense of others. It is a dirty word in popular parlance.

According to Aristotle, man is a political animal. He cannot keep himself away from politics. Students, too, do not need to keep away from politics. Though their priorities lie in the academic

field, they can still take an intelligent interest in the political affairs of the country.

A student should not participate in so called active politics. In recent months, we have seen students fighting for the natural rights of a human being, as in Poland or in Chile. This is a sacred duty of their own. But in the Indian context, the things that our foreign brothers fight for already exist—things like freedom of thought, speech and action. So what do the Indian students seek through politics ?

POLITICS INSIDE THE CAMPUS

Student politics inside the campus actually means Students' Union activities. In theory, this is a body of students elected to represent the students in all matters and in general to work for betterment of conditions of students. Election is on basis of capability and popularity.

In practice, this is hardly the case. Political parties dominate the union in so far as the members have strong political leanings. They are frequently inefficient, but protests against them are not vociferous for fear of the strong party backing. Efficient students who vie for the union posts are outnumbered even if they reach that body, or are

threatened with physical injury if they do not quit the race.

Most students therefore, keep away from union politics and lend support to its activities only when threatened ; These union, members, with the help of local toughs or 'goondas' always usurp the union funds. They are least bothered about the students' woes ; their concern is only to further their own interests.

Students who fail in academics often resort to the party 'dadas' to be promoted by pressurising the authorities. Thus, undeserving students get through and also swell the party membership. Such a situation exists in most medical college of Calcutta, where even admission has got a "Union quota".

The students can themselves change the situation by not yielding to strong-man tactics. They can then elect just people to the union and by their vote, banish party nominees. This cannot be done only because, in practice, the ballot is not secret any more, but can be known by the Union members by pressurising the authorities. The students who fail to vote party candidates are then physically harmed.

The fault lies deeper. A student who stands for election must be 'bold' enough to resist threats

and to give expression to his views. Only if he has the support of the student body, does he feel secure that he will not be penalized for his opinions. More often than not, bureaucracy and political parties unite to call party strong-man to wage vendetta against such a student to hide their own inefficiency and corruption.

The self-proclaimed gods in positions of power do not tolerate even a hint of criticism levelled against them, and ruin those who expose their hypocrisy. Whenever a party comes to power, its 'goondas' and cadres, often with the help of the police, clear the College Street area of opposition and terrorize college students to elect candidates sponsored by the party. With every change in the Vidhan Sabha we see a repetition of the blood-bath.

Another advantage for the parties is that the college administration is under the control of the State government and hence under their control. So the administration cannot contradict the party wishes.

Union politics have reached an abysmal low point. The situation will continue as long as students are afraid of the Union bosses and the administration of the college remains in the hands of the State government. The solution lies in the hope of a defiant outburst by students and

teachers alike to end all party domination and start afresh.

POLITICS OUTSIDE THE CAMPUS

There have been many political revolts among students of our country, mostly shrouded in a bizarre fog of misunderstanding, the most recent being the one in Assam, where contentions range from eviction of 'foreigners' to accusations of corruption among high Government officials. When asked what their aims are, students frequently turn to their political 'dadas' for an answer.

In Assam and elsewhere the reason why students join political movements is to be found in their overall dissatisfaction with their environment. Students jump into any movement promising any improvement, though most of the leaders of these movements don't care two hoots about the students they utilise. Not only does this not satisfy them in the long run, but it also ruins their individual academic careers.

Before joining any movement, the student should analyse what he is going in for. An initial intellectual appraisal is necessary before the plunge. That students frequently join in the general fray without any well-formed aim and purpose, just for the sake

of excitement, was amply illustrated by the turbulent heydays of the Naxalite movement. The Naxalite leaders who had their own notions about existing systems incited the students to a principle of Nihilism. Due to their immature minds, they fell easy prey to such incitements. But they never had close acquaintance with the Naxalite ideals. Theirs was a listless scramble in search of excitement. In the process, boys even in their early teens got involved in galling incidents of killing and destruction. Most of them lost interest in studies—the path of violence was more interesting to them. Again, their activities were detrimental to the education system, spoiling the environment necessary for studies. In the long run, the Naxalite movement lost the initial tempo and petered out, being confined to stray acts of violence. It left behind a ravaged education system, a band of frustrated youths who had given the best years of their lives for aimless destruction and consequently, had ruined their careers. Many limbs and lives were also lost in the process.

The early days of 1975 saw two major student movements in Bihar and Gujarat under the leadership of Jayprakash Narayan. Perhaps what J. P. wanted was to built up the student power in our country, so that they could act as a viable force dedicated to the cause of the country. But in reality, the movement was directed primarily against the Congress regime at the centre. The

leaders of the movement directed the students not only to boycott educational institutions, but also to cause disruption of classes and public life. Once again, a lot of time and energy were spent by the students that failed to make any concrete contribution, while the movement like the Naxalite one, petered out.

Discussions should take place on a broad base, inviting different opinions and debating relevant issues. If the student finds that political parties intend to exploit him he should be vocal and inform others of the danger.

In a democratic set up senseless violence is most uncalled for. Citing the Assam case once more, the meaningless blowing up of pipelines and cold-blooded murder of 'foreigners' do not bring any overall improvement. It just squeezes more of our already scarce resources. Where the ruling body is elected by the majority, it is the people themselves who have sent up the people constituting the ruling body. Any violence against them is violence against the majority, which is foolish and devoid of any ideological basis. Strong feelings among the students suggest changes in the existing political framework. Students do not want to meddle in politics, but mostly do because they are forced by the widespread inefficiency and corruption all around them.

DISCUSSIONS

S. R. Shome, Asutosh College raised the fundamental issue whether students should at all participate in politics. In his opinion students should not take part in active politics. Politics without any built-in-value system is something which the students should avoid. He also suggested that first a student should build up his career and only thereafter could he take part in politics, if he so desired.

Achinta Chatterjee, Gurudas College—Politics according to his understanding is a 'hoax'.

Bhaskar Sarkar, South Point High School was of the view that faculty groupism in an educational Institution adversely affects the academic environment ; in the process students are forced to take sides and indulge in politics in the perverted sense of the term. He also pointed out that students sometimes take part in politics because of environmental factors. His view was that the Students Union sometimes exerts pressure on the students in an unethical manner. He, therefore, felt strongly that before any student takes part in politics he should consider all the above-mentioned factors and should never act in haste.

Kaustuv Sengupta, Habra High School felt that students should take part in politics. In his

assessment students' associations sometimes indulge in violent activities and quite often function as an integral part of the state political body. In his view the political processes in which a student should participate should be completely different from the ones which do exist now.

Bandana Roy Chowdhury, Calcutta University felt that the questions raised by the earlier speakers were not very relevant to the topic of the session and therefore suggested that the speakers should pin-point their views on the questions given at the end of the reference paper.

P. Mukherjee, Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India states that to a student devotion to study is considered to be more important than participation in active politics.

Soumitra Pramanik, Presidency College gave a different interpretation of politics. To him politics should be viewed as a social science of great importance. The students should take active interest in doing analytical in-depth socio-economic research. He illustrated his point by referring to the abuse of atomic power by the politicians in defiance of the advice given by the scientists, who through sustained research developed the technology of atomic power with the explicit understanding that the technology would be used for the welfare of human beings

Herein lies the fallacy of those who contend that students should have political awareness arising from their studies of political theories and principles, without being involved in active politics. He however strongly felt that this will be possible in a just and equitable society. He specifically stated that students should be more concerned with constructive aspects of politics.

Dinesh Sharma, Institute of Cost & Works Accountants of India gave his opinion as to why politics is necessary. He is of the view that only through politics it is possible to ensure fair representation of the group view/public opinion.

Neyaz Azam, Bangabasi College stated that the students should not participate in politics.

Gopal Mishra, Calcutta University—For the personal development of any student politics has a major role to play. He advocated participation by the students in politics specially in a situation where the performance of the political leaders is not satisfactory. Politics, as it exists today according to his understanding of the situation is completely devoid of any ethics and is primarily geared to subserve the interests either of a particular politician or a group of politicians.

Debasis Banerjee, Presidency College felt that in today's society the very word "Politics" has

assumed a negative character. It has become something always to be shunned. He regretted that under the present social system we have not yet been able to build up suitable norms for guiding the behaviour of a politician. Nor have we been able to build up proper channels for removal of grievances of people belonging to different segments of society. In a situation like this the students quite often feel helpless and out of compulsion often join politics in the hope that they would be able to utilize the machinery for redressing their grievances. He strongly expressed his view that a student never joins politics as a part of his career development but quite often joins politics because he is a victim of adverse circumstances. He suggested six norms which should be complied with if the society desires that a student should not join politics. Of those one very important norm suggested by him is that there should be a forum where the students can get an opportunity to discuss in detail their views and suggestions on different political issues/problems. He was not in favour of a club type forum as suggested by the Chairman. His opinion was that the forum should be such that it could ultimately, if necessary, become the origin of an acceptable common view. Such a view might ultimately find a place in the politics of a society.

Subrata Talukdar, Presidency College—In his perception politics should be viewed as a conflict-

resolving agency. He did not subscribe to the interpretation of politics as "active or passive". He criticised the paper submitted by Sri Dasgupta as being replete with negative suggestions. He thought that there were many positive aspects of politics of which a student should be aware. The characteristics of politics as practised by the students of present show self-centredness ; political activities all the time, being viewed by a student as a means for achieving his narrow goal in life. He finally found fault with the present educational system and the values now prevalent in our society.

Biswajit Paul, Bansberia High School highlighted the following distortions in politics :

- 1) Politics & politicking
- 2) Politics and groupism
- 3) Law and order problems like students murders and politics

In his view a student is sometimes murdered for for reasons which are not political by in nature.

Sumita Gupta, Presidency College differed with some of the observations made in the resource paper.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Swami Yuktananda

I am overwhelmed by what I have witnessed today, by the in-depth analysis and the urge for a qualitative change expressed in the students' deliberations during this whole day seminar.

In the first two chapters on students' relations with parents and with teachers, what struck me most was the palpable expression of pain for not having been able to respect their parents and teachers, because of reasons for which the younger people cannot be held responsible. The analyses and arguments showed clearly that they want to respect, in fact they start with respecting, only to become disillusioned and frustrated, thus creating a great confusion in themselves. In such a situation it is difficult for the younger generation to keep their vision clear about accepted values.

In this state of affairs it becomes imperative for young talent to assume leadership. Creativity and innovativeness are required for blazing new trails in order to renew and keep alive the awareness of the enduring values in ever-changing circumstances. For this reassessment has to be made through

sustained intellectual effort, followed by orientation of behaviour in accordance with the convictions achieved.

We gain nothing by discarding traditions just because they are old. There may be parts which have become irrelevant in changed conditions, but there are many noble things which continue to be transmitted through tradition from the wisdom of the past to the experience of the present. We have to find out whatever is precious and relevant in our traditions ; these have to be restored and kept alive.

Value orientation is not a concept of ad hoc adjustment but is a comprehensive approach for the total development of man. It is not something which can be made clear in the course of a days discussion but rather an on-going process which requires that the conclusions arrived at are shared from time to time with people in general.

Perennial values come from the well-spring of a fundamental value and the changing man-made values must conform to the fundamental one. This fundamental value on which the value system is structured is the *Unity underlying things, events and consciousness*. This truth is not only established by metaphysics but is about to be endorsed by the far-reaching discoveries of the exact sciences. There have been times when we wanted to ignore metaphysics but

with progress in our search for truth we realize that metaphysics is also an aspect of our life, and without it we cannot formulate any acceptable programme for development.

I have been asked to comment on the use and impact of TV programmes. Television is now a part of our life ; it should serve for the betterment of our life including joyful entertainment. Our educational system and examination methods cannot justify the present programme schedule, nor our heritage the programme content. Even our social life is being affected. People must be articulate about these disadvantages ; pressure-groups may be required to have the programmes re-scheduled. A country like ours, badly needing discipline for its progress can hardly permit live sports relays on the air at any hour of the day when it is found that even bank employees sit with transistors glued to their ears, reluctant to serve customers and irritated when service is demanded. It is dangerous to provide all amenities to people who do not have the discipline to use them properly.

If youth can provide the leadership and bring in an awareness of the value system, then only will goodness become effective. The ineffective goodness, a characteristic of a large section of the people today, is not goodness, it is cowardice.

As our Chairman, Shri Roy Chowdhury has so aptly put it, even if a person in authority fails to

command respect, yet by virtue of his position we should respect him. This sense of discipline is necessary to preserve a social structure ; without it society disintegrates. Let me give you an analogy. By pouring water on it, it is man who creates Shiva out of a stone and then in return he obtains Shiva's grace. In the same way, we must extend our respect to whoever is in the position of a parent or a teacher or in any other position of authority. If we want to be respected, and it is only humane to want respect, we must make ourselves fit for it. If we go on respecting the superiors even in uncongenial circumstances, we are making investments in future. This is the way in which we can break the vicious circle of perpetual disrespect between the two sections for which mutual trust and respect are the blissful cementing forces.

Regarding the chapter on students and politics I have this to say, that politics is the outcome of the inherent desire in men to strive to establish the welfare of all. It is based on the same value system that raises man to sainthood. Revolution in human development cannot be considered in the same way as revolution in industry or agriculture. Human development is analogous to organic growth, one cannot destroy the old in order to create something new. For, progress in what may be called the human factor in man, *continuity* must be maintained.

In our time we have achieved technologically one world but emotionally one is far apart from another.

Because of our confusion based on false assumptions about ourselves we isolate each other as separate individuals. This is against nature and against truth. Only the intellectual conviction of our true objective can clear the confusion in our outlook, and free us from our conflicting ideas. If this can be done, integrity will be established in our personality and the contradiction in behaviour which is the malaise of our society, whose other name is hypocrisy, can be overcome.

The chapter on students and the examination system has been handled with great competence and even brilliance by many delegates. The suggestions made by them clearly command consideration by those at the helm of affairs. In response to the delegates request, on behalf of Vivekananda Nidhi, I assure them that their recommendations will be forwarded to the appropriate authorities.

I congratulate the organizers of the seminar, the participating delegates, and the observer delegates comprising parents and teachers, whose presence is both an encouragement to the younger generation and a recognition of the importance of their endeavour. I also express my deep appreciation of the skill shown by the Chairman, Shri Subrata Roy Chowdhury in conducting the deliberations of a seminar which is surely a unique effort of its kind. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Shri Subrata Roy Chowdhury

I express my deep appreciation for what I have seen today. You have done me very great honour by asking me to be Chairman today. I must frankly confess that the standard of deliberations, the depth, the searching questions that we heard today, to my mind is something which can compare with any country of the world, with some of the best there must be. I can also tell you this is just the beginning of an on-going debate on the four very important topics that you have chosen for the seminar. I can assure you that I am taking with me the deliberations that have taken place to California, where I start teaching from March 31, 1981 for a period of ten weeks as the Regents' Professor of the University of California. I have never taught before and I have had no relationship with students as such. I have been a professional man all my life. I am deeply honoured by the invitation which the University of California has extended to me. I have to teach there not law but Politics, International Relations and Human Rights. Whatever deliberations have taken place today will be of immense importance to the task I have undertaken in California. I start on March 31 with

a group of twentyfive Politics majors or honours students who have been selected out of about five-hundred applicants for my seminar. I have to send them in advance the topics I will be teaching, and also the reading materials they must go through from the first week of February to the end of March. My students will go through the materials and topics indicated and get ready. When I go there it will be the seminar system of teaching, apart from the public lectures that I shall have to deliver in the eight campuses of the University of California. Today I am so impressed by the standard of the deliberations here that I have requested Swamiji to let me have all the papers so that I can tell them what the students in Calcutta are thinking along these lines. Basically you are discussing some of the problems which affect students all over the world, and in a more aggravated form than we feel here in India as yet. Therefore I am absolutely certain that I will be able to develop a dialogue between the students who participated in the conference here and the students in California University.

What we have discussed today is the question of values. Values have national, international and regional dimensions. If you go through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, December 10, 1948, you find they embody those perennial values. If you go carefully through the different human rights instruments you find basically there are three concepts :

- 1) Dignity of the individual,
- 2) Sovereignty of the nation and integrity of the country,
- 3) International peace and security.

These three are interlinked ; any aspect you conceive of including the aspect we are discussing today comes under one or other of these three basic items. Therefore I request you to keep on this debate, to have further debates and discussions to make constructive proposals. I am hopeful that Vivekananda Nidhi will be able to organize the next seminar when we will hear what the teachers have got to say. Finally this chapter will be concluded by a joint session of teachers and students. This, I think, is one of the aspects in which our future on-going programmes can proceed.

I shall now read out the recommendations of the day and there has been consensus on each one of them. It is almost like achieving the impossible, as was the concensus in the non-aligned conference recently held in Delhi.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Session I

Students and Parents/Guardians

1. Public opinion should be aroused through mass media so that both the students and their parents become aware of their mutual responsibilities.

Delinquent children should be treated with understanding.

2. The schools and colleges should organize "Parents' Meetings" periodically as suited for the Institutions. In colleges "Forums of Responsible Students" may organize symposiums involving parents and teachers on campus problems.
3. All the family members should try to spend time together as much as possible to generate a sense of belonging and to bridge the generation gap.
4. Research groups should be formed to find out how the efforts of the students, who are sitting idle after an examination, could be

utilized in creative activities. Educational institutions should carry this out.

5. Irrespective of circumstances, it is essential to respect our parents at least as an investment in future, so that, when we grow up, we can command respect from our youngers.

Session II

Students and Teachers

1. Students should realise that their relationship with teachers is a continuous association, based on mutual trust and respect.
2. The personal ideologies, be they political, religious or otherwise, of teachers should not affect their relationship with the students.
3. Violence should be eschewed on all occasions. While in confrontation with the college authority, the students should first resort to peaceful written recommendations. If they fail, mass opinion should be aroused in favour of the cause through public meetings and/or silent demonstrations without disturbing the class schedule.
4. Intimidatory measures, psychological or otherwise, should be condemned.

5. Project-oriented educational tours provide ample opportunities to generate a proper understanding between the teacher and his pupil and would help both to take a sympathetic view of their respective problems.
6. Teachers should be made free of bureaucratic control and be given more power in respect of students' problems.
7. An assessment by the students on the teachers' capabilities should be submitted to the authorities for evaluation of teachers' performance.

Session III

Students and the Examination System

To stop adoption of unfair means in the examination hall and elsewhere, the following are recommended :

1. Independent creative thinking on the part of the students should be encouraged. The students should be allowed to use books in the examination hall. Pattern of questions should be changed so that cramming becomes impossible. For instance, in a paper on literature the students might be asked to identify the author by analysing the form, vocabulary,

images, theme, tone etc. of a given passage. The essay type questions should be counter-balanced with the objective type ones.

Questions should be problem oriented, i.e. relevant to the current trends and situations we face in our daily life.

2. The teacher should take the initiative to launch a creative project so that it would bring a sense of involvement among the students. The students of Economics, for example, may go along with their teacher for wide survey of the present market condition. Thus they will have a practical idea of the market mechanism.

Upto a certain stage, the education provided should be liberal and general instead of specialised. Let the students choose the subjects they are interested in untrammelled by fear of examinations. The small percentage of pupils with an inclination towards scholarship should go in for higher studies. And for majority, we suggest job-oriented education.

3. The method of assessment should be changed. Instead of having one final examination at the end of a one-year or two-year course, the institutions should have periodical tests as often as possible. Instead of asking questions and having them answered, the

teacher should have candid exchange of views with his pupils and take the pains of having them recorded. This internal assessments should be treated as part of the examination result.

4. Publication of note books, 'guides, 'sure success', etc. should be stopped forthwith.

Session IV *Students and Politics*

1. A student should not participate in active politics. Instead, they should have their own forum where they can have frank discussions, arrange debates and seminars and thus show their concern for political issues. It should be a viable unit to take part in organizational affairs and gain experience for future matters.
2. Students' Unions should not be affiliated with political parties.

General

1. The prevalent practice amongst employers of fixing the eligibility norm, for recruitment, at graduation in almost all levels has resulted in

1

a scramble for degrees. Many jobs do not require educational qualifications of that level. If eligibility norms for educational qualifications are fixed according to job-requirements, the pressure of students at the undergraduate level would be substantially reduced, allowing better attention to those who come for graduation and higher studies.

2. Follow-up programmes should be taken to create an awareness among the student community and make them interested in our thoughts and involve them in our programmes.
3. The resolutions of the house should be sent to the heads of the educational institutions and the different Government departments concerned.
4. We thank Vivekananda Nidhi for giving us the opportunity of organizing the Seminar. We are looking forward to similar opportunities in future to enable us to conduct follow-up programmes.
5. We request Vivekananda Nidhi to extend facilities so that we can have on-going action programmes as a follow-up of this very significant seminar.

WORDS OF THANKS

Dr Evelyn Guha

President, Student's Seminar Committee

Mr Chairman, Swamiji, student delegates, observers and friends, on behalf of the Students' Seminar Committee and on my own behalf I thank you all, and especially our Chairman, who in spite of his preoccupations preparatory to his going abroad to take up his appointment at the University of California, had been gracious enough to spare us so much of his time. It is an indication of his involvement in the value orientation programmes.

I thank Vivekananda Nidhi's Seminar Organizing Committee for having made this seminar possible and especially its Joint Secretary, Shri Saikat Guha for his support. As you all know the inspiration behind the value orientation movement is Swami Yuktananda ; on behalf of all of us here, I express our deep indebtedness to him. I shall fail in my duty if I do not record our gratitude to India Carbon Ltd for their ready response in helping to prepare the course material at very short notice.

Before taking leave of you, let me remind the student community that in response to their

request, discussions on value orientation, its theory and programmes have been arranged every Saturday from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Vivekananda Nidhi's Office*. All young people in the age groups 17—30 years are most welcome.

*86F Monohorpukur Road, Calcutta 700 029

DELEGATES' PROFILE

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Number</i>
Presidency College	19	Instt. of Business	
Calcutta University	8	Management and	
Indian Instt. of		Research	1
Management	6	Muralidhar Girls'	
Kshudiram Bose		School	1
College	7	St. Lawrence High	
South Point High		School	1
School	5	Heramba Chandra	
College of Nursing	4	College	1
Jadavpur University	3	Bangabasi College	2
St. Xavier's College	2	Instt. of Cost and	
Gokhale Memorial		Works Accountants'	
Girls' School	2	of India	5
Bhowanipur Education		Brahmo Girls' School	1
Society	1	Habra High School	1
Moulana Azad		Bansberia High	
College	2	School	1
Gurudas College	1	Nivedita Vratī Sangha	
Kalyani University	2	(Jadavpur)	6
Asutosh College	1	Medical College	5
Goenka College of		Indian Instt. of	
Commerce	1	Modern Management	
Loreto College	2	(St. Xavier's)	4
Women's Christian			
College	1		<hr/>
			96
			<hr/>

ASSESSMENT BY STUDENT DELEGATES

		Rating (%)
1. The venue was	a) good	70
	b) unsatisfactory	30
	c) could have been better	—
2. The general arrangements		

OBSERVER DELEGATES

Banerjee Subal Chandra
Basu Maitreyee
Basu Naresh Chandra
Basu Nita
Basu Sobhana
Bhattacharya Rupashree
Bose Sudeb
Chakravarty Indira
Chakraborty S. K.
Chakravarty Tapan
Chanda Bimal Kumar
Chowdhury S. C.
Das Gupta Bijaya
Das Gupta Santwana
Das Gupta Shuva
Das Gupta Subhayu
Dutt Sucheta
Ganguli Abha
Ganguli Amita

Ganguli Namita
Ghosh Ramkrishna
Ghosh Rita
Ghosh S.
Guha Evelyn
Halder Byomkesh
Mitra Indrani
Mitra Krishna
Mitra Nimai
Mukherjee Manju
Mukherjee Shanti
Roy Benoy Bhusan
Roy Kamala
Roy Somnath
Roy Chowdhury Subrata
Saha Alope Kumar
Samanta Ch. Sekhar
Sanyal Dipankar
Sen Sanjay

STUDENT DELEGATES

<i>Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>
Acharya Sriyankar	Presidency College
Azam Neyaz	Bangabasi College
Banerjee Bhaskar	Institute of Modern Management
Banerjee Debashis	Presidency College
Banerjee Niladri Sankar	Calcutta University
Bardhan Anjana	Nivedita Vrati Sangha, Jadavpur
Basak Mina	Khudiram Bose College
Basu Gautam	Presidency College
Basu Parna	Loreto College
Basu Soma	Loreto College
Bera Rabindranath	Calcutta University (Science College)
Bhatt Amal	Presidency College
Bhattacharya Debasis	Kalyani University
Bhattacharya Manashi	Nivedita Vrati Sangha, Jadavpur
Bhattacharjee Nilanjan	St. Xavier's College, Calcutta
Bhattacharya Nirjhar	Medical College
Bhattacharya Ram Sankar	Presidency College
Biswas Didhiti	Calcutta University

<i>Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>
Biswas Narad Chandra	Presidency College
Biswas Sanchita	Gokhale Memorial Girls' School
Bose Gourango	Khudiram Bose College
Chakraborty Debasish	Institute of Cost & Works Accountants of India
Chakraborty Pradip	Bangabasi College
Chakraborty Trithul	Goenka College of Commerce
Chakrovorty Rita	College of Nursing, S.S.K.M. Hospital
Chatterjee Achinta	
Kumar	Gurudas College
Chatterji Pompa	College of Nursing, S.S.K.M. Hospital
Chatterjee Riya	South Point High School
Chatterjee Sukanya	Presidency College
Chowdhury D. P.	Management St. Xavier's College
Das Manisha	Nivedita Vrati Sangha, Jadavpur
Das Maya	Nivedita Vrati Sangha, Jadavpur
Das Santhana	Nivedita Vrati Sangha, Jadavpur
Das Gupta Aniruddha	St. Xavier's College
Das Gupta Debapriya	Presidency College
Das Gupta Soma	Presidency College
Das Gupta Susmita	Presidency College
Dev Sen Antara	South Point High School

<i>Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>
De Radha Raman	Medical College
Dhara Santinath	Jadavpur University
Duari Debi Prosad	Presidency College, Calcutta
Dutta Asitendu	Medical College
Ghosh Dulal Chandra	Jadavpur University
Ghosh Monisha	College of Nursing, S.S.K.M. Hospital
Ghosh Tinku	Khudiram Bose College
Gupta Sumita	Presidency College
Karmakar Sagarika	College of Nursing, S.S.K.M. Hospital
Maitra Tamal	Presidency College
Mallik Sudip	Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta
Maiti Mriganka	Calcutta University
Maity Himangsu Sekhar	University of College of Science & Technology, Calcutta
Maity Nirmal Kumar	University of College of Science & Technology, Calcutta
Maity Nitai	Institute of Cost & Works Accountants of India
Mandal Jaba	Bramho Balika Sikshalaya
Majumdar Raikamal	Calcutta University
Midya Aroop	Medical College
Misra Gopal Chandra	Calcutta University (Arts)
Misra Sukanta	Medical College
Mitra Anusree	Presidency College

Name	Institution
Mitra Partha	Heramba Chandra College
Mitra Sanjay	St. Lawrence High School
Mohanta Sarobindu	Presidency College
Morris Sebastian	Indian Institute of Management
Mukherjee Ashim Kumar	Presidency College
Mukherjee Malabika	Gokhale Memorial Girls' School
Mukherjee Prabal	Institute of Cost & Works Accountants of India
Mukherjee Rabindranath	Khudiram Bose College
Mukherjee Susanto	Khudiram Bose College
Mukherjee Tapankar	Bhawanipur Education Society College
Pal Biswajit	Bansberia High School
Pramanik Soumitra	Presidency College
Radha P. S.	South Point High School
Raman G. K.	Institute of Modern Management, St. Xavier's College
Ramesh N. J.	Indian Institute of Management
Rao K. Srimannarayana	I.B.M.R., Swinhoe Street Calcutta
Roy Choudhury	Presidency College
Bandana	Muralidhar Girl's High School
Roy Devjani	Nivedita Vrati Sangha, Jadavpur
Roy Swapna	Jadavpur University
Rudra Chandrima	

Name**Institution**

Saha Apurba Kumar

Institute of Ch. Accounts
of India

Saha Soumitra

Moulana Azad College

Sanyal D. K.

Institute of Cost & Works
Accountants of India

Sarkar Arun Kumar

Khudiram Bose College

Sarkar Bhaskar

South Point High School

Sen Sandip

Institute of Modern
Management

Sen Sankar

Kalyani University

Sen Upal

Moulana Azad College

Sen Gupta Debjani

South Point High School

Sen Gupta Kaustav

Habra High School

Sen Gupta Suparna

Womens' Christian

College

Sharma Dinesh Chandra

Institute of Cost & Works
Accountants of India

Sharma Sanjay

Indian Institute of
Management, Calcutta

Shome Samannoy

Asutosh College

Srikhande Milind

Indian Institute of
Management

Talukdar Subrata

Presidency College

Venkatraman M.

Indian Institute of
Management

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NEMAI MITRA
Service

"I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God."

Swami Vivekananda